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A Mother's Day Tribute

Luckily for moms, what's old is new again

By [National Security Research Center](#) staff

A mother's love for her child is expressed in so many ways.

And strongly reinforced when they're wearing matching clothes.

Today's mother-daughter twinning trend has actually been part of a global fashion cycle that began in Europe more than a hundred years ago and included Los Alamos by the time the Lab opened in 1943.

This photo of a woman and little girl was taken at the townsite commissary in the mid-1940s. It is part of the unclassified collections of the Lab's National Security Research Center.

A July 1938 *Life* magazine article noted the summer's rise in popularity of mothers and daughters dressing alike during the World War II era.

The matchy-matchy style became increasingly popular during the same time as the secret city's Lab swelled with scientists and support staff – and their families. Home sewing was seen as a patriotic move and "mother-daughter outfits served as a kind of civilian uniform, projecting unity as well as efficiency," according to "The Curious History of Mommy-and-Me Fashion."

Over the decades, the trend would rise and fall as women's roles in the home and workplace changed. Today, the desire for a mother to twin with her mini-me has resurged – perhaps the best gift she could ever ask for.

Special thanks to NSRC Historian Ellen McGehee and NSRC Archivist John Moore.